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Message Text

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QUOTE: S E C R E T TEL AVIV 0177

EXDIS - HANDLE AS NODIS

PARIS FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

DEPT FOR ACTING SECRETARY, ATHERTON, AND SAUNDERS

DEPT PLEASE PASS VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE

E.O.11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: OVIP(CARTER, JIMMY) IS, EG, US, XF
SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S VIEWS ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S
REPORT OF HIS MEETING WITH SADAT

REF: SECTO 13092

BEGIN SUMMARY. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN ASKS THAT THE
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PRESIDENT BE INFORMED OF HIS APPRECIATION FOR MY BRIEFING
ON ASWAN TALKS SO SOON AFTER EVENT. ALSO WISHES PRESIDENT
TO KNOW HE IS ESPECIALLY APPRECIATIVE OF FACT PRESIDENT
MADE NO COMMITMENT TO SADAT ON SELF-DETERMINATION ISSUE.
HE EXPRESSED HOPE WE WOULD NOT RESPOND TO SADAT'S PUBLIC
SUGGESTION THAT US BRING PRESSURE ON ISRAELIS TO MODIFY
THEIR PLAN. BEGIN STILL CONSIDERS IT A FAIR PLAN AND

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"EVERYONE HAS AGREED THAT IT IS A FAIR BASIS ON WHICH TO NEGOTIATE."

BEGIN INTERPRETED FAVORABLY THE PRESIDENT'S ASWAN PRESS STATEMENT PHRASE "ENABLE THE PALESTINIANS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR OWN FUTURE." IN REITERATING HIS INABILITY TO ACCEPT USE OF THE PHRASE "SELF-DETERMINATION" HE SAID HE HAD MADE ABUNDANTLY CLEAR TO SADAT THE ISRAELIS COULD NOT SIGN ANY DECLARATION CONTAINING THIS PHRASE. NONETHELESS, HE WANTS TO FIND A FORMULA TO HELP SADAT, BUT HE WARNED HE IS NOT GOING TO BEND UNDER THREATS OF SADAT'S RESIGNATION OR OTHER "CATASTROPHIC RESULTS." I URGED THAT HE KEEP HIM MIND OPEN TO USE OF SOME FORMULATION WHICH CONTAINED PHRASE "SELF-DETERMINATION" BUT WAS FRAMED IN A MANNER WHICH RESTRICTED ITS MEANING TO PRECLUDE AN INDEPENDENT STATE AS THE OUTCOME.

DAYAN THINKS THE PRESIDENT'S PHRASE "ENABLE THE PALESTINIANS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR OWN FUTURE" TO BE INGENIOUS. HE ASKED WHY BOTH WE AND THE EGYPTIANS COULD NOT ACCEPT ITS USE IN A DECLARATION IN PLACE OF "SELF-DETERMINATION." LANGUAGE COULD BE ADDED ABOUT PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION FROM THAT USED IN US-ISRAELI WORKING PAPER. BECAUSE IT IS AN "AMERICAN PHRASE" WE COULD PERHAPS SAY TO SADAT THAT IF HE ACCEPTED ITS USE IN A JOINT DECLARATION, THEN ISRAELIS MIGHT.

BEGIN AGREED THERE MERIT IN THIS PROPOSAL BUT ADDED CAVEAT

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THAT OF COURSE IT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR US TO INTERPRET PHRASE AS NOT MEANING A PLEBISCITE BUT RATHER RELATING SOLELY TO PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATING PROCESS BY THE PALESTINIANS. I ARGUED THAT TO HAVE ANY CHANCE OF ACCEPTANCE EACH SIDE WOULD HAVE TO INTERPRET PHRASE AS IT WISHED.

DESPITE BEGIN'S REPEATED CONCERNS OVER DANGERS TO ISRAEL OF THE USE OF BARE PHRASE "SELF-DETERMINATION", HIS FAVORABLE REACTION (AND DAYAN'S) TO THE NEW PHRASEOLOGY ADOPTED BY THE PRESIDENT AT ASWAN MAY POINT TOWARD AN AMBIGUOUS FORMULA TO BRIDGE THE GAP ON "SELF-DETERMINATION". END SUMMARY

1. BEGIN AND DAYAN RECEIVED ME TOGETHER FOR ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF THIS MORNING, JANUARY 5, TO HEAR ABOUT THE MEETING IN ASWAN BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRESIDENT SADAT. YEHUDA AVNER WAS THE ONLY OTHER PERSON PRESENT.

2. I CONVEYED THE MESSAGE IN REFTEL ALMOST WORD FOR WORD TO BEGIN AND DAYAN AS THEY LISTENED INTENTLY. THEY ASKED WHETHER I HAD ANY INFORMATION ON THE MEETINGS IN TEHRAN AND RIYADH AS WELL. I SAID THAT I DID NOT AS

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YET HAVE ANY DETAILED REPORTS ON THOSE TWO STOPS TO PROVIDE BUT HOPED TO HAVE SOMETHING SHORTLY FOR THEM. I ADDED, HOWEVER, ON A PURELY PERSNAL BASIS THAT IT WAS MY IMPRESSION KING HUSSEIN'S VIEWS WERE QUITE CLOSE TO SADAT'S IN A NUMBER OF AREAS AND THAT HE WAS HOPEFUL OF BEING ABLE TO JOIN IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IF A SATIS-FACTORY DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES COULD BE WORKED OUT. (SECTO 13100 ARRIVED ONLY AFTER MY RETURN TO TEL AVIV.)

3. BEGIN THEN ASKED ME THANK THE PRESIDENT VERY MUCH FOR HIS REPORT. HE WAS ESPECIALLY APPRECIATIVE OF THE FACT THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD MADE NO COMMITMENTS TO SADAT ON THE SELF-DETERMINATION ISSUE. HE SAID HE WAS NOT SURPRISED BY THIS FACT, HOWEVER, SINCE IT WAS

CONSISTENT WITH HIS CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT CARTER IN WASHINGTON.

4. BEGIN THEN CALLED MY ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT SINCE HIS RECENT VISIT TO WASHINGTON HE HAD BEEN STUDIOUSLY CAREFUL IN PUBLIC NEVER TO SAY THAT THE U.S. HAD "ENDORSED" HIS PEACE PROPOSALS; RATHER HE HAD ALWAYS REFERRED TO THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT THAT HE CONSIDERED IT TO BE A "FAIR BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION." BEGIN SAID HE HAD TO POINT OUT, HOWEVER, THAT IN ALL OF HIS MEETINGS WITH AMERICAN LEADERS, BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, HE HAD FOUND REAL SUPPORT FOR HIS PEACE PLAN, AND THAT THERE WERE MANY FAVORABLE ADJECTIVES USED ABOUT IT WHICH HE HAD NOT QUOTED PUBLICLY HERE. HE SAID HE HOPED WE REALIZED THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAD MADE NOT ONLY AN INTELLECTUAL EFFORT BUT A GENUINE NATIONAL EFFORT TO COME UP WITH A FAIR PLAN, AND IT WAS A PLAN WHICH EMBODIED REAL RISKS FOR ISRAEL AS WELL AS ONE WHICH WAS STIMULATING SHARP INTERNAL POLITICAL CONTROVERSY. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY GRATEFUL FOR THE ALLUSION IN REFTEL TO THE FACT THAT HE WAS STANDING UP TO DOMESTIC CRITICISM. HE SAID RUEFULLY THAT IT IS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT "TO HAVE TO BE ATTACKED BY OUR BEST FRIENDS IN FRONT OF OUR POLITICAL OPPOSITION" (PRESUMABLY IN THE KNESSET AND ITS COMMITTEE); THAT HIS POLITICAL LIFE WAS NOT AN EASY ONE AT PRESENT. HOWEVER, WHEN I INTERJECTED THAT I WAS CERTAIN HE WOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE THE PROBLEM POLITICALLY, HE SMILINGLY AGREED. BEGIN THEN MADE THE POINT THAT HE DID NOT SUPPOSE FOR A MINUTE THAT WE WOULD RESPOND TO PRESIDENT SADAT'S PUBLIC SUGGESTION THAT WE BRING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON THE ISRAELIS TO MODIFY THEIR PLAN, SINCE "IT'S A FAIR PLAN, AND EVERYONE HAS AGREED THAT

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IT IS A FAIR BASIS ON WHICH TO NEGOTIATE."

5. BEGIN THEN WENT ON TO SAY HE WOULD LIKE TO EXPLAIN TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY SOMETHING OF THE REASONING BEHIND THE METHOD OF NEGOTIATIONS HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAD CHOSEN. HE SAID "WE DECIDED THAT WE DID NOT WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN A TYPICAL EASTERN SOUK--THAT IS AN ORIENTAL BARGAINING SITUATION." "WE COULD HAVE STARTED BY PROPOSING WE WITHDRAW ONLY HALFWAY IN SINAI, THE PLAN TO YIELD ANOTHER QUARTER, AND THEN HAGGLE OVER EVERY YARD. WE DID NOT WANT TO GO AT THE PROBLEM IN THAT WAY. RATHER WE PREFER," HE SAID, "TO MAKE A MAJOR LEAP FORWARD INITIALLY WITH OUR PROPOSAL IN ORDER TO GET TO A GENUINE PEACE." (THIS EXPLANATION BY BEGIN IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTING SINCE HE HAS BEEN COMING UNDER HEAVY FIRE HERE IN THE PRESS AND FROM THE OPPOSITION FOR HAVING GIVEN AWAY ALL OF SINAI AT THE BEGINNING OF NEGOTIATION, WITHOUT GETTING ANY CONCESSIONS FROM SADAT ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION IN EXCHANGE.)

6. BEGIN THEN WENT ON TO SPEAK ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS STATEMENT AFTER THE ASWAN MEETING. HE INTERPRETED THE PRESIDENT'S PHRASE "ENABLE THE PALESTINIANS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR OWN FUTURE" FAVORABLY; HE SAID THAT IN FACT ISRAEL HAD ACCEPTED THIS KIND OF PHRASEOLOGY IN THE U.S.-ISRAELI WORKING PAPER (WHICH PARENTHETICALLY HE ADMITTED WAS NOT OPERATIONALLY RELEVANT AT THE PRESENT TIME). HE INTERPRETED IT TO MEAN THAT THE PALESTINIANS (OR OF COURSE PREFERABLY FOR BEGIN THE "PALESTINIAN ARABS"), WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE NEGOTIATION AND IN THAT WAY IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR OWN FUTURE. INTERESTINGLY, BEGIN NOR DAYAN MADE ANY REFERENCE TO THE PHRASE "THE LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE," ABOUT WHICH THEY RAISED SUCH A FUROR WHEN IT WAS USED IN THE JOINT U.S.-SOVIET STATEMENT OCTOBER 1.

7. "BUT, CONTINUED BEGIN, THERE IS ONE WORRISOME PHRASE IN THE CARTER STATEMENT ABOUT WHICH HE WOULD NOT COMMENT PUBLICLY." THIS WAS THE PHRASE "IN ALL ITS ASPECTS," WHICH FOLLOWED THE PHRASE "THERE MUST BE A RESOLUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM." BEGIN SAID THAT THIS LANGUAGE HAD BEEN PROPOSED TO HIM BY THE EGYPTIANS AT ISMAILIA AND THEREFORE HE KNEW IT WAS

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"EGYPTIAN LANGUAGE." OBVIOUSLY, HE SAID, THE PRESIDENT HAS EVERY RIGHT TO EXPRESS HIS OWN VIEWS, BUT HE FELT IT WAS PROPER TO CONSULT WITH HIM BEFORE ADOPTING "EGYPTINA LANGUAGE." I INTERJECTED AT THIS POIT THAT I THOUGHT HE WAS WRONG ABOUT THIS INTER-PRETATION. I RECALLED THAT THE PHRASE "IN ALL ITS ASPECTS" HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITHIN THE AMERICAN OFFICIAL DELEGATION IN WASHINGTON DURING HIS VISIT AN LANGUAGE WHICH MIGHT POSSIBLY BE USEFUL IN BREAKING THE DEADLOCK OVER THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. I DID NOT KNOW WHETHER IT HAD EVER BEEN PROPOSED BY ANY OF THE AMERICAN OFFICIALS TO THE ISRAELIS,BUT I KNEW IT WAS LANGUAGE WE HAD BEEN CONSIDERING OURSELVES LONG BEFORE THE ISMAILIA MEETING. BEGIN TOOK MY POINT, BUT SAID HE HAD NEVER HEARD IT BEFORE THE EGYPTIANS HAD USED IT AT ISMAILIA.

8. BEGIN THE REHEARSED AT SOME LENGTH THE ARGUMENTS WITH THE EGYPTIANS AT ISMAILIA OVER THE DRAFT DECLARA-TION, AND PARTICULARLY THE DISCUSSION OF THE PHRASE "SELF-DETERMINATION." HE SAID THAT HE HAD MADE IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR TO PRESIDENT SADAT THAT HE COULD NEVER AGREE TO A DECLARATION INCLUDING THIS PHRASE. HE SAID HE WOULD LIKE US TO MAKE SURE THE EGYPTIANS KNOW IN ADVANCE THAT IF THEY COME TO JERUSALEM WITH A DRAFT DECLARATION INCLUDING EITHER THE PHRASE "AN

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INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE" OR "SELF-DETERMINATION," THAT THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SIGN IT. THIS SHOULD BE CRYSTAL CLEAR TO THEM, HE SAID. HE THEN REHEARSED AT SOME LENGTH THE FAMILIAR ARGUMENT THAT SELF-DETERMINATION IS EQUIVALENT TO ACCEPTANCE OF AN INDEPENDENT STATE AND THEREFORE A "MORTAL DANGER" FOR ISRAEL AND ABSOLUTELY UNACCEPTABLE. IF WE WANT TO FIND LANGUAGE FOR A COMMON JOINT DECLARATION, HE SAID, THE EGYPTIANS SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR OTHER LANGUAGE WHICH WILL MEET THEIR POLITICAL PROBLEM. IF THEY CANNOT FIND SUCH LANGUAGE THEN WE MIGHT EVENTUALLY COME BACK TO THE PROPOSAL FOR THE DECLARATION ON WHICH THEY HAD ALMOST AGREED AT ISMAILIA, UNTIL SADAT WAS PERSUADED AWAY FROM IT BY "THE PROFESSORS" IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. (IN OTHER WORDS, AGREEMENT ON THE PHRASE "A JUST SOLUTION FOR THE PROBLEM OF THE PALESTINIAN ARABS," WITH EACH SIDE THEN GIVING SUBSEQUENTLY ITS OWN INTERPRETATION OF WHAT THE JUST SOLUTION SHOULD INVOLVE.)

9. BEGIN THEN REMINDED ME THAT BEFORE SADAT'S VISIT TO JERUSALEM AND AGAIN BEFORE HIS VISIT TO ISMAILIA,

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HE AHD RECEIVED MESSAGES FROM PRESIDENT CARTER URGING
HIM TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF SADAT'S DIFFICULT POLITICAL
SITUATION AND TO TRY TO WORK OUT AGREED LANGUAGE FOR
A DECLARATION TO AVOID "CATASTROPHIC RESULTS," AND,
HE SAID, HE HAD HEARD DIRECTLY FROM THE EGYPTIANS MORE
THAN A HINT THAT SADAT MIGHT HAVE TO RESIGN IF
BEGIN DID NOT AGREE TO THE LANGUAGE OF A JOINT DECLARA-
TION WHICH THE EGYPTIANS WERE PROPOSING. HE SAID
"WE PLAYED IT COOL. AND THE RESULT WAS THAT SADAT
HIMSELF SAID OUR DRAFT WAS 'ENOUGHT FOR THE EGYPTIAN
PEOPLE.' ALTHOUGH HE CHANGED HIS MIND TWICE ON THE
SPOT IN RESPONSE TO ARGUMENTS FROM HIS 'LEARNED DOCTORS,'
WE EVENTUALLY AGREED ONLY ON THE STATEMENT WHICH SADAT
READ TO THE JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE. AND LOOK AT WHAT
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HAS HAPPENED. NO DISASTERS HAVE OCCURRED; SADAT
RETAINS THE SUPPORT OF HIS PEOPLE AND HIS MILITARY,
AND THERE HAS BEEN NO RESIGNATION. LET'S BOTH YOU
AND WE LEARN SOMETHING FROM THIS SEQUENCE." BEGIN
CONCLUDED HIS PERORATION ON THIS SUBJECT BY SAYING
THAT THEY WOULD INDEED LIKE TO FIND A FORMULA TO HELP
SADAT, AND THAT THEY ARE VERY SENSITIVE TO HIS PROBLEMS WITH
THE OTHER ARABS. "BUT WE CANNOT ACCEPT THE PHRASE
SELF-DETERMINATION, WHICH MEANS AN INDEPENDENT STATE,
AND THEREBY WOUND OUR OWN PEOPLE."

10. I INTERJECTED AT THIS POINT A HOPE THAT HE WOULD
AT LEAST KEEP HIS MIND OPEN TO SOME FORMULATION, WHICH
AS YET NO ONE HAS BEEN ABLE TO CONSTRUCT, IN WHICH THE
WORDS SELF-DETERMINATION ARE USED BECAUSE OF THEIR
GREAT POLITICAL AND SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE, BUT IN A FRAME-
WORK WHICH RESTRICTS THEIR MEANING TO PRECLUDE AN
INDEPENDENT STATE AS THE OUTCOME. I ARGUED THAT I DID
NOT BELIEVE IT WAS BEYOND THE WIT OF MAN TO FIND SUCH
A FORMULATION, AND AS I HAD SAID TO DAYAN THE OTHER
DAY I HOPED THAT THE ISRAELIS WOULD PUT THEIR MIND TO
SUCH A SEARCH SINCE THIS SUBJECT DOES HAVE SUCH A HIGH
PRIORITY FOR THE FIRST PHASE OF THE JERUSALEM MEEETINGS.

11. DAYAN THEN JOINED THE DISCUSSION. WITH REGARD TO
THE DECLARATION, HE SAID HE WAS HAPPY TO HEAR BEGIN'S
INTERPRETATION OF CARTER'S PHRASE "ENABLE THE PALES-
TINIANS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR
OWN FUTURE." THEY HAD NOT HAD A CHANCE TO DISCUSS IT,
BUT HE HAD ALREADY GIVEN DINITZ THIS MORNING THAT
FAVORABLE INTERPRETATION OVER THE TELEPHONE. THE
DAYAN WENT ON TO TRY TO BUILD ON THIS PRESIDENTIAL
LANGUAGE TO BRIDGE THE GAP ON THE "SELF-DETERMINATION"
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PHRASE. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THE PHRASE WAS INGENIOUS
AND ASKED WHY BOTH WE AND THE EGYPTIANS MIGHT NOT
BE SATISFIED WITH USING IT IN A JOINT DECLARATION IN
PLACE OF "SELF-DETERMINATION." ONE COULD ADD TO IT
LANGUAGE ABOUT REPRESENTATION OF THE PALESTINIANS TAKEN
FROM THE JOINT U.S.-ISRAELI WORKING PAPER. BUT, DAYAN
SAID, RETURNING TO A THEME HE HAD USED AGAIN WITH ME
IN OUR LAST MEETING, TO CONVINCE SADAT OF AN ISRAELI
PROPOSAL IS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT. "THE BEAUTY OF
THIS PHRASE IS THAT IT WAS AN AMERICAN PHRASE." PERHAPS
WE COULD SAY TO SADAT THAT IF HE ACCEPTED IT FOR A JOINT
DECLARATION THEN PERHAPS THE ISRAELIS MIGHT DO SO AS
WELL, AND THE NEGOTIATION COULD THEN BE SUCCESSFUL.

12. BEGIN INTERJECTED AT THIS POINT THAT HE AGREED WITH DAYAN
BUT THAT OF COURSE IT WOULD BE NECESSARY THAT THE PHRASE BE
INTERPRETED BY THE AMERICANS AS MEANING PARTICIPATION IN THE
NEGOTIATING PROCESS BY THE PALESTINIANS, RATHER THAN EANING
A PLEBISCITE. PICKING UP DAYAN'S OPENING, I SAID THAT THIS WAS
A GENERAL PHRASE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD USED AND
PERHAPS WOULD HAVE TO BE LEFT GENERAL TO HAVE ANY
CHANCE OF ACCEPTANCW WITH EACH SIDE INTERPRETING IT
AS IT WISHED.

13. AT THIS POINT IN THE CONVERSATION, BEGIN THOUGHT
FOR A MOMENT AND THEN SAID HE HAD A VERY IMPORTANT
MESSAGE HE WOULD LIKE ME TO CONVEY TO PRESIDENT CARTER
ON THIS WHOLE SUBJECT. HE SAID "THERE ARE MANY
BEAUTIFUL WORDS WHICH HAVE EVENTUALLY BROUGHT DISASTER
TO THE WORLD." HE RECALLED THAT PRESIDENT WILSON HAD
FIRST INTRODUCED THE PHRASE "SELF-DETERMINATION" INTO THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE. IT WAS A REVELATION FOR THE OPPRESSED
PEOPLES OF THE EASTERN EUROPEAN EMPIRES AND IT HELPED THE
WORLD IMMEASURABLY TO HAVE NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION AS
A PRINCIPLE ON WHICH TO BUILD A NEW EUROPE. INDEED, ON
BEHALF OF THAT PRINCIPLE, THE JEWISH PEOPLES' RIGHT O
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SELF-DETERMINATION WAS AFFIRMED IN 1919.

14. "BUT," HE SAID, "IN THE LATE 1930'S, THE
PHRASE 'SELF-DETERMINATION' WAS TRAGICALLY MISUSED BY
THE GERMANS. IT WAS THE SLOGAN TRUMPETED FROM EVERY
ROOFTOP WITH RESPECT TO THE SUDENTENLAND AND TO THE
RIGHT OF THE SUDETEN GERMANS TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN

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DESTINY. THE SLOGAN AND ITS RESULTS EVENTUALLY PRODUCED
DISASTER AND NOT JUST FOR THE GERMANS ALONE. SELF-
DETERMINATION FOR THE ARAB PEOPLE, FOR THE GREAT ARAB
NATION, IS BOTH JUST AND TRUE. 'BUT," HE SAID, "THE
PALESTINIAN ARABS ARE ALMOST EXACTLY ONE PERCENT
OF THE TOTAL ARAB NATION. TO ARGUE THAT EVERY FRACTION
OF EVERY NATION IS ENTITLED TO SEPARATE SELF-DETERMIN-
ATION FLIES IN THE FACE NOT ONLY OF JUSTICE BUT ALSO
OF PRECEDENT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD." HE CITED THE
CORSICANS, THE BASQUES, THE TYROLESE OF ALTO ADIGE
IN ITALY, AND THE MEXICAN-AMERICANS ALONG THE U.S.-MEXICAN
BORDER,AS ONLY A FEW EXAMPLES OF GROUPS WHOSE
RIGHT TO "SELF-DETERMINATION" IS NOT RECOGNIZED BECAUSE
OF BROADER NATIONAL SECURITY OR POLITICAL CONCERNS.
THEREFORE, HE SAID, EVEN IF THE PHRASE "SELF-DETERMINA-
TION" IS VERY POPULAR AROUND THE WORLD, WE MUST NOT BE
IMPRESSED OR MISLED THAT EVERY MINORITY IN EVERY
NATION OR EVERY FRACTION OF A PEOPLE CAN EXPECT INDEPENDENT
STATEHOOD ON THE BASIS OF THE PRINCIPLE. HE THEN RETURNED
AGAIN TO THE ARGUMENT THAT THE PALESTINIAN ARABS ARE A
TINY FRACTION OF THE ARAB NATION, A NATION WHICH
ALREADY HAD 21 INDEPENDENT ARAB STATES, WHILE THE
JEWISH NATION HAS ONLY ONE STATE WHOSE SECURITY
MUST REMAIN PARAMOUNT. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER
THAT I WOULD TRY TO CONVEY THE FORCE OF HIS ARGUMENT
TO THE PRESIDENT AND TO THE SECRETARY. BUT I CONCLUDED
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THIS PART OF THE CONVERSATION AGAIN URGING HIM TO
RETAIN SOME OPEN MINDEDNESS ON PHRASEOLOGY, AND TO
THINK AS HARD AS POSSIBLE ABOUT WHAT ALTERNATE PHRASES
OR CONSTRUCTIONS MIGHT BE USED IN A DECLARATION WITH
THE PHRASE SELF-DETERMINATION TO AVOID THE DANGEROUS
CONSEQUENCES HE OUTLINED. (UNFORTUNATELY I CANNOT
SAY HE PROMISED TO DO SO.)

15. I WAS INTRIGUED TO SEE THAT BOTH BEGIN AND DAYAN
HAD REACTED FAVORABLY TO THE NEW PHRASEOLOGY ADOPTED
BY THE PRESIDENT AT ASWAN. DAYAN'S IDEA OF USING THE
AMBIGUITIES IN THAT PHRASEOLOGY TO BRIDGE THE GAP ON
"SELF-DETERMINATION" SEEMS FROM HERE TO BE WELL WORTH
PURSUING. THERE IS NO DOUBT AT ALL, AS IF THERE HAD
BEEN BEFORE, ABOUT BEGIN'S CONVICTION ON THE DANGERS
INVOLVED IN THE BARE PHRASE "SELF-DETERMINATION." I
ASSUME THAT PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRESIDENT SADAT
EXPLORED AT ASWAN SOME OTHER FORMULAS WHICH MIGHT HELP
GET ACROSS THIS BRIDGE. SECRETARY VANCE'S MOST DELICATE
TASK HERE AT THE JERUSALEM MEETINGS WILL BE TO LEAD
BEGIN TOWARD SOME SEMANTIC COMPROMISE. IT WILL
CERTAINLY NOT BE EASY, AND AT THIS STAGE I HAVE TO

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PREDICT THAT THE COMPROMISE WILL HAVE TO BE GREATER
ON THE EGYPTIAN SIDE IF A DECLARATION IS TO BE
ACHIEVED. LEWIS UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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